

**Bear River North Regional Council
Roundtable Meeting
Bridgerland Applied Technology College
Logan, Utah
Wednesday, May 14th, 2008
Rooms 171 D and 171 E**

In attendance:

Commissioner William Cox	County Commissioner, Rich County
Vern Gunnell	United States Air Force, B.A.T.C.
Commissioner John Hansen	Cache County Council Member
Randy Hopkins	Department of Workforce Services
Evan Maxfield	Wheatland Seed
Lana Powell	State Farm Insurance
Bruce Rigby	Zions Bank
Dawn Skorka	Wal-Mart
Thom Smith	Alcoa
Susan Thackeray	Economic Development
Scott Williams	U.S.U. Extension

Manufacturing Roundtable Guests:

Steve Chadaz	Box Elder Adult Education
Jeff Gibson	Wendy's Restaurant
Paul Goldman	Paragon Medical
Marian Olson	Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM)
Kayleen Reese	ATK Launch Systems
Jim Stephenson	Cache Schools Adult Education

Department of Workforce Services Staff:

Dixie Baughman	Program Specialist
Jill Bingham	Brigham E.C. Manager
John Mathews	North Region Economist
Carrie Peterson	Administrative Secretary
Debbie Sparks	Logan E.C. Manager
Melisa Stark	Research Consultant
Susan Wright	Regional Council Liaison

1. **Welcome /Introductions**

- Thom Smith, Bear River North Regional Council Chair, welcomed the attendees and conducted introductions for the group.
- As a result of the Bear River North Regional and Youth Council sector strategy planning and deliverables, the Regional Council planned a round table event to connect with existing industry and partner foundations. Council members, private employers, educators, partners, and D.W.S. staff were invited.
- The goal of the meeting was to gather recommendations to find what the Council can do to meet the needs of employers.

2. **Manufacturing Data - John Mathews, D.W.S. Economist**

- An informational overview of the Bear River economy was provided.
- For 2007, it was reported that for the Bear River area –
 - 26% of jobs were in the manufacturing industry
Total Manufacturing Employers = 18,750
Total Establishments = 300
 - 7% of the jobs were in the construction industry
- The total employment for all Bear River sector industries, Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Construction, was 60,000 to 70,000 with a growth rate of 2.6% per year.

Employment rate -

- Manufacturing - 16,384 to 18,753 - growth of 2.1%
- Healthcare - 3,966 to 5,826 - growth of 6.7%.
- Construction - 3,266 to 4,751 - growth of 6.5%.

Average Wages -

- Box Elder \$3,375
- Cache \$2,250
- Rich \$1,899

State, Box Elder, Cache, and Rich Unemployment Rates March 2008

- Box Elder 3.6%
- Cache 2.9%
- Rich 2.4%
- Utah 3.3%
- U.S. 5.1%

- The economy for 2007 showed there was a recession, and Utah is recovering.
- John Mathews referred the attendees to the D.W.S. website for additional information.

3. **Opening Discussion**

- Randy Hopkins, D.W.S. North Region Director, explained that the Governor is very concerned about the education system and has commissioned a task force. Kristen Cox, D.W.S. Executive Director, has been appointed to the task force that will be reviewing the education system to produce graduates and trainees.
- The Wasatch North Regional Council prepared a "white paper" to present their recommendations for the manufacturing industry. The goal is to meet the needs of employers who have skilled manufacturing jobs and need trained employees.
- John Mathews commented that it would be important to consider education and training, and understand the number of jobs that require a 4-year degree or more are one in five. Post secondary education will improve Utah's global competitiveness.

- Because of the concentration of manufacturing in Box Elder, it ranks in the top 5 in Utah counties for wages, \$3,375 (\$19.47/hr). State wages at \$3,044 (\$17.56/hr) are above the Cache average \$2,250 (\$12.98/hr) and Rich \$1,899 (\$10.96/hr).

3. **Points of Discussion**

- a. Workforce Readiness – The need for Technical Education to meet the needs of employers with trained employees
 - Marketing technical education to students and parents
 - Soft skills / work readiness skills training -
 - Debbie S. commented on the workforce readiness class offered at the Bridgerland Applied Technology College. D.W.S. has experienced a tremendous amount of success and reached many people through the program.
 - Bruce Rigby recommended adding work readiness training to the school curriculum and the Council visiting the schools to talk about what employers need from their employees. He recommended sending a letter from the Council to the schools to offer to go into the schools and talk about work readiness skills.
 - Marian Olson reported that SHRM educates ninth graders on how to apply for jobs. They are also working with the counselors to educate the students on how to apply for jobs.
 - Educating students about career and training opportunities
 - Melisa Stark noted that the perception issues about the types of jobs that are skilled trades and construction business. Some parents believe it is their child that needs to attend college and they don't think about the technical career opportunities. She recommended educating parents to show the value in the technical jobs so students can support themselves and their own families.
 - Lana Powell commented that the perception needs to be addressed by the companies to help change the perception of the jobs.
 - Melisa Stark noted she was involved in Construction Career Days and Motor-Fest, to help with the perception issues. 7th graders have a required CTE class first exposure into careers. 9th grade through senior those already in construction or automotive classes. The events provide hands-on experiences for kids that are amazing and have more impact than a lecture. Melisa Stark noted that some students attended with the construction days with the D.W.S. career ladder to as an assignment. This was a best practice that will be done at the other events.
 - Scott Williams talked about providing the students with career exploration opportunities. The after school programs, could reach students during the hours of 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. The time could be used for enrichment activities to give the students the opportunity to explore career choices. An example was the natural resources field day for 4th grade students, which provide a series of activities. He asked the 30-40 students how many like to visit the canyon, only 6 or 8 had the opportunity to previously visit Logan Canyon and explore nature. Some of the students don't have the life experiences and the after school programs offer the students the opportunities to enhance those experiences.
 - ESL classes – would D.W.S. have training dollars for occupational English courses?
 - Public Education - Programs in Manufacturing: High Schools, UCAT, and USU.
 - Impact of the new High School Graduation requirements on technical education programs at the high schools and UCA
 - Educating High School students and parents on technical career opportunities
 - Vern Gunnell talked about the Utah Construction Career Days. The students

were provided with hands-on experience on the different types of equipment. The Construction Fair involved the students and there has been interest in a heavy-duty construction class from the A.T.C.

- Vern Gunnell noted that the average age at the Applied Technology College is 28 and 29 years of age. A college is an exposure of what they want to do. Many of the students take courses to gain managerial skills, and it is a very popular request from companies that the A.T.C. offer more managerial and supervisor classes. How do you interest those students in the targeted industry sectors jobs?

c. Communication between Education, Government and Manufacturing Companies

- Commissioner William Cox asked if it would be possible to provide the students with a two-year certificate that would be recognized by industry.
- Vern Gunnell reported that the A.T.C.s give out associate degrees for drafting, medical assistant, and information systems.
- Randy Hopkins noted this would be something good for the Governor's task force to look at.

4. **Closing Discussion**

- o A "white paper" will be written to gather the recommendations from the meeting attendees for the targeted industry sectors.

Action Item: Randy Hopkins gave Susan Wright the assignment of drafting the white paper recommendations to be sent to the Governor's Task Force.

- o Thom Smith thanked the participants for their attendance and invited them to join the Bear River North Regional Council if they are interested in making an impact on their community. He asked that they contact Susan Wright if they are interested in participating.